

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SSM-05 SIG-02 ACDA-10
TRSE-00 OMB-01 /120 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MKBERRY:DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. COLLUMS
NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

-----110534Z 129173 /23

R 092231Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 105632

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 9

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 9, 1977:

Q. REPORTS IN THE ISRAELI PRESS SAY THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS NOW EXCLUDED ISRAEL FROM THE LIST OF COUNTRIES RECEIVING PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT INsofar AS ARMS TRANSFERS ARE CONCERNED. IS THAT CORRECT?

A. I WOULD JUST MAKE A GENERAL OBSERVATION ON THAT. AS SECRETARY VANCE SAID IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE LAST WEEK, THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT MADE FINAL DECISIONS ON THE ARMS TRANSFER POLICY. AND PRIOR TO THOSE DECISIONS, WE ARE NOT GOING TO DISCUSS THE SPECIFICS, NAMELY, THE POLICY.
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NOW, AS A GENERAL PROPOSITION, I CAN NOTE THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS A CONTINUING ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL, AND THAT WILL BE MAINTAINED.

Q. DOES THAT MEAN, THAT U.S. POLICY REALLY HAS THREE FLOORS: ONE FOR OUR FRIENDS, ONE FOR ISRAEL AND ONE FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD?

A. I WOULDN'T WANT TO AGREE TO ANY KIND OF CHARACTERIZATION LIKE THAT. I SIMPLY CAN'T ADDRESS THAT KIND OF THEORETICAL CONFIGURATION OF OUR POLICY, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF WHAT I HAVE JUST SAID ABOUT THE OVERALL ARMS TRANSFER POLICY AND THE FACT THAT THIS IS STILL AWAITING PRESIDENTIAL DECISION.

Q. CAN YOU DEFINE THE POLICY AS IT WAS BEFORE THIS NEW SET-UP?

A. I REALLY WOULDN'T WANT TO DEFINE IT OFF THE CUFF, NO.

Q. WHERE DID ISRAEL STAND BEFORE THIS NEW POLICY HAS BEEN FORMULATED?

A. I AM JUST NOT PREPARED TO GIVE YOU A COGENT STATEMENT, OFFICIAL STATEMENT, OF ANYTHING REALLY AS IMPORTANT AS THAT WITH REGARD TO OUR ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT, AS I HAVE JUST SAID, THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT YET MADE FINAL DECISIONS.

Q. IF THE ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL IS A CONTINUING ONE AND IT WILL BE MAINTAINED, WHAT EFFECT WILL THE NEW GUIDELINES HAVE UPON IT, IF ANY?

A. LET'S WAIT AND SEE WHAT THE NEW GUIDELINES ARE AS A RESULT OF THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION, MARVIN. I COULDN'T UNCLASSIFIED

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REALLY HAZARD ANY KIND OF PREDICTION ON THAT.

Q. WHAT I AM ASKING IS WHAT POLICY HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO OUTLINE FOR YOU WHAT IS BEING CONSIDERED BY THE PRESIDENT AT THIS MOMENT. I CAN'T DO THAT.

Q. WILL THIS SUBJECT BE RAISED IN THE FORTHCOMING MEETING BETWEEN MR. GROMYKO AND MR. VANCE IN GENEVA?

A. AS YOU KNOW, WE DON'T GO INTO PREDICTING THE SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED IN ANY GREAT DETAIL, BUT THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF THE MIDDLE EAST IS CERTAINLY ONE THAT IS ON THE AGENDA.

DO YOU ACCEPT THE THESIS THERE IS A SPECIAL CATEGORY OF COUNTRIES, FOR EXAMPLE, NATO, IN RECEIVING AMERICAN ARMS THAT ARE GIVEN SPECIAL OR PREFERENTIAL --

A. AT THIS POINT I WOULD REALLY PREFER NOT TO ACCEPT ANY THESIS IN ANTICIPATION OF THE REVIEW THAT IS GOING ON NOW AND THE IMMINENCE OF PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONS ON THE MATTER.

Q. I REALLY APPRECIATE THAT, BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW FACTUALLY IF THERE IS A SPECIAL TIER OF PREFERRED COUNTRIES BECAUSE WE HAVE AN ARMS RELATIONSHIP WITH LOTS OF COUNTRIES.

A. IN A WAY THAT IS JOE'S AND NISSIM'S QUESTION AGAIN AND I, RIGHT NOW WITHOUT VERY CAREFUL LANGUAGE, WOULD NOT CARE TO CHARACTERIZE WHAT OUR PRESENT POLICY IS IN TERMS

OF LEVELS.

Q. THERE IS A POLICY RIGHT NOW. ISN'T THERE A POLICY?
AS I UNDERSTAND IT, A POLICY ON ARMS HAS BEEN DRAFTED BY
THE DEPARTMENT AND OTHERS AND IT IS NOW BEFORE THE PRESI-
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DENT. IT IS UP TO HIM NOW TO MAKE A DECISION AS TO
WHAT'S WHAT. BUT, YOU ALSO SPEAK OF A REVIEW GOING ON.
IS THIS A REVIEW BY THE WHITE HOUSE?

A. ANY PAPERS OR POLICY MEMORANDA THAT ARE BEFORE THE
PRESIDENT OBVIOUSLY INCLUDE A PIECE ON WHAT OUR GENERAL
POLICY HAS BEEN WITH SPECIFIC DETAILS, AND THEN PROPOSALS
FOR CHANGES OR PROPOSALS FOR KEEPING WHAT ALREADY EXISTS.

IN TERMS OF REVIEW, IT IS REVIEW IN THE SENSE OF LOOKING
AT IT VERY HARD AND COMING UP WITH SOME HARD DECISIONS.
THAT IS THE REVIEW.

CHRISTOPHER

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